

This was the largest deployment of the Alaska National Guard since World War II and thankfully all 586 guardsmen who were deployed overseas returned home safely. Many of these guardsmen had never left Alaska prior to joining the National Guard, but none hesitated to serve their country.

As I told the National Guardsmen at their welcome home ceremony at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, "You can't support the troops unless you respect them. And I humbly respect you because you have done your job as you were charged to do so, and as volunteers. You left your families and you went forth and accomplished what you were taught to do."

I truly believe that the importance of the National Guard to our country cannot be overstated, which is why it is important that we honor these citizen-soldiers. For this reason I am introducing the following resolution to honor these Guardsmen for their outstanding service to our country.

H. CON. RES. 240

Whereas the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry of the Alaska Army National Guard deployment of almost 600 Alaskans was the largest deployment of the Alaska National Guard since World War II;

Whereas the Alaskans of the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry came from 80 different communities across Alaska;

Whereas the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry included 75 soldiers from New York, Mississippi, Illinois, Georgia and Puerto Rico;

Whereas the 586 soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry were mobilized in July of 2006 and deployed to Camp Shelby, Mississippi;

Whereas the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry was deployed to Camp Navstar and Camp Buehring in Northern Kuwait;

Whereas the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry courageously performed route and perimeter security missions, mounted combat patrols and inspections and searches of vehicles going into Iraq from Kuwait, among other assignments;

Whereas the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry, over the course of 15 months in Kuwait and Iraq, inspected and searched over 30,000 semi-trucks;

Whereas the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry designed all force protection plans in northern Kuwait;

Whereas the families of the members of the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry have provided unwavering support while waiting patiently for their loved ones to return;

Whereas the employers of members and family members of the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry have displayed patriotism over profit, by keeping positions saved for the returning soldiers and supporting the families during the difficult days of this long deployment, and these employers are great corporate citizens through their support of members of the Armed Forces and their family members;

Whereas the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry has performed admirably and courageously; gaining the gratitude and respect of Alaskans and all Americans; and

Whereas members of the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry received 7 Bronze Stars, 23 Meritorious Service Medals, 142 Army Commendations and more than 200 Army Achievement Medals for their outstanding service; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) commends the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry of the Alaska Army National Guard upon its completion of deployment and brave service to the Commonwealth of Alaska and the citizens of the United States; and

(2) directs the Clerk of the House of Representatives to transmit a copy of this resolution to the Adjutant General of the Alaska National Guard for appropriate display.

HONORING FORMER CONGRESSMAN CHARLES VANIK

HON. BETTY SUTTON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 24, 2007

Ms. SUTTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to pay tribute to former Congressman Charles Vanik, who served his constituents with honor and integrity in this body for 26 years.

On behalf of the people of Ohio's 13th District, I want to express my deepest sympathies to his wife of 62 years, Betty Best Vanik, their two children, John Vanik and Phyllis Vanik, his two grandchildren and the rest of the Vanik family.

We have lost a man who dedicated his life to serving our great State and this great country. Prior to being elected to Congress in 1954, Congressman Vanik served on the Cleveland City Council, in the Ohio State Senate and as a Cleveland municipal judge. He also served in the Navy during World War II.

In Congress, he earned a reputation as savvy legislator and a tireless advocate for the people of northeast Ohio. His 1974 amendment to the Trade Reform Bill is widely remembered for forcing the Soviet Union to allow fair treatment and increased emigration of Soviet Jews. This accomplishment had a significant impact on American-Soviet relations.

And Congressman Vanik was ahead of his times on civil rights, sacrificing his own congressional seat in 1968 so that Louis Stokes could become Ohio's first African American Congressman.

But Charles Vanik was so well-regarded in northeast Ohio that voters from the neighboring district would not stand for him leaving this House, and they chose to send him to Congress instead of the Representative who had served for nearly 30 years. Congressman Vanik returned to Congress and continued to work with Congressman Stokes and others to advocate for the people of Ohio.

Although I did not have the privilege of serving in the House with Congressman Vanik, I am honored to follow in his footsteps as a public servant and a voice for the people of Ohio.

It is truly an honor to stand on the Floor of the House of Representatives, where Charles Vanik stood for so many years fighting for northeast Ohio, to celebrate his life and his accomplishments.

And it is wonderful to hear so many touching stories about the memories my colleagues have of him and the influence he had on this House and its Members.

Although Congress, the United States, and the State of Ohio have lost a great statesman, he has been outlived by his legacy, and I am confident that we will continue to fondly recall Charles Vanik and the great work he did for years to come.

Again, I want to express my condolences to the Vanik family.

HONORING FORMER CONGRESSMAN CHARLES VANIK

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 24, 2007

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to pay tribute to a fellow Ohioan, Charlie Vanik, who served honorably for 26 years in this House.

Charlie passed away last month at the age of 94, and I thank the gentlewoman from Cleveland for organizing this special order in his memory.

Charlie Vanik was a beautiful person. In many ways, he was the quintessential Cleveland—born of Czechoslovakian ancestry, he represented Cleveland's east side and eastern suburbs and did so with distinction and with class. He was learned and determined. As Dick Feigler, the well-known journalist in Cleveland said of Charlie, "It was all about hard work and humility." Charlie Vanik was a showman, but he wasn't a showoff. He was charming and he was humble.

He threw himself into public service with a style and gusto that his constituents enjoyed and appreciated. He took his responsibilities seriously, but he didn't take himself seriously. He rose to a position of prominence on the Ways and Means Committee. In fact, he became chairman of the trade subcommittee.

But make no mistake: Charlie Vanik never sold out. He never succumbed to the seduction of what the pundits call "Gucci Gulch." Charlie never forgot where he came from: 55th and Broadway had a different values set than Gucci Gulch. Still does.

So Charlie Vanik fought tooth and nail against tax loopholes for big business. He never forgot where he came from. Charlie Vanik may have retired from Congress, but his heart and mind kept working for America everyday.

On a regular basis, I would get phone calls from Charlie, just to say hello. He was never representing a client for monetary compensation—he always just kept working for America, and wanted to share his great ideas. He gave away his ideas—MARCY, he would say, Congress needs more strong voices to protect consumers in our nation, or on another occasion he would call to remind me to replace the sand on the public beaches of the Great Lakes that had either washed away or been used by construction companies over the years. Early on in my career, he advised me to visit many of the foreign embassies located in Washington to link to diplomats and scholars. He shared his love of life, and always called with an enthusiasm that revealed his joyful, encouraging and caring nature. His humanity was underscored by the manner in which he watched over his wife as she became ill. He never lost his way.

His name was attached to one of the landmark pieces of legislation from the Cold War era: the Jackson-Vanik Amendment. In truth, Senator Henry Jackson and Representative Charlie Vanik were actually ahead of their